

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
294 WASHINGTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02108

AREA B AH + AC	FORM NO. 52
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n Lexington

ress 9 Hancock Street

toric Name Garrity House

: Present Residential

Original Residential

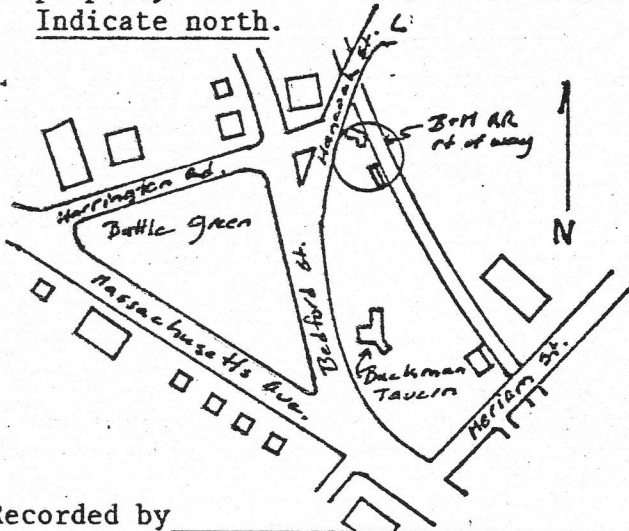
DESCRIPTION:

e c. 1830

ource Family letter

SKETCH MAP

Show property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection. Indicate north.



Recorded by Anne Grady

Organization Garrity House Committee
Town of Lexington

Date January 30, 1983

Style Federal/Greek Revival

Architect

Exterior wall fabric clapboard

Outbuildings carriage house (see photo)

Major alterations (with dates)

1840-1845: lean-to addition to North to fill in the ell;

c. 1910: one-story gable-roofed addition at East end.

Carriage hse. moved
Moved bk fr. Hancock St Date 1913

Approx. acreage 19,500

Setting Located at the North corner of Buckman Tavern property, Garrity

House and carriage house are part of a set of period buildings surrounding Lexington's Battle Green.

(Staple additional sheets here)

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.)

The Garrity House is a transitional Federal/Greek Revival vernacular structure. A simplified Greek Revival frontispiece is the only exterior ornamentation. Picturesque massing, the use of skived clapboards, and the survival of old sash, shutters, and a substantial amount of early hand-blown glass contribute to the historical character of the building. The reduced scale of the building as compared to other structures, historical and contemporary, in the vicinity and its proximity to the street (unusual for Lexington), are other factors in its visual appeal.

(cont.)

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.)

The Garrity House was constructed in the 1830s by Col. John Parkhurst Merriam who incorporated one of more earlier outbuildings into the structure. The Garrity House, the adjacent carriage house (built c.1810), and the Buckman Tavern are the last surviving structures of what was in the 19th century a prosperous twelve-building farm complex known as the Meriam Farm. Purchased with the tavern and the land comprising Buckman Park in 1913 from the Meriam Family by the Town of Lexington, the Garrity House was, until 1957, the home of Mr. Jack Garrity, Lexington's Park Commissioner. From 1958 until 1978, the building housed the local chapter of the American Red Cross.

The Garrity House is, in its simplicity and picturesque massing, representative of many farm buildings constructed in Lexington in the 18th and 19th centuries. Few of such modest scale survive today. Because of its prominent location next to the Battle Green, the Garrity House is an effective reminder of Lexington's past as a simple farming community.

During the time that the Normal School was operating across the street after 1939 four female students kept house here while attending classes.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES (name of publication, author, date and publisher)

- Anbinder, Eleanor, et al.. Report on the Garrity House, Lexington, Mass. Architectural and Social History, Existing Conditions, and Recommendations for Restoration and Reuse, 1981. Boston University course paper.
- Brown, Willard D.. The Story of Buckman Tavern. Lexington Historical Society, Lexington, MA, 1967.
- Carroll, Orville W.. The Garrity House, An Architectural Analysis, July 27, 1981. Report to Garrity House Committee.
- Finch, William B.. Memorandum of June 2, 1981 to the Garrity House Committee on Examination of the Garrity House, May 2, 1981.
- Griffing, Abbie Stetson. Letters to Dr. Tilton, December 19, 1913, December 28, 1913, and January 5, 1914, (Lexington Historical Society Archives).
- Hudson, Charles. History of the Town of Lexington, Middlesex County, Massachusetts, from its First Settlement to 1868, Vol. I. The Riverside Press, Cambridge, MA, 1913.

(cont.)

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:

Lexington

Form No:

Property Name: Garrity House

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

Most important, however, is its role with the carriage house in providing picturesque closure at the Northeast perimeter of the Battle Green.

The carriage house, an equally simple structure, appears from construction characteristics to have been built c. 1810. There are three sets of doors, two with a characteristic Federal elliptically-arched frames.

BIBLIOGRAPHY/REFERENCES

Kelly, Beverly. Lexington: A Century of Photographs. Lexington Historical Society, Lexington, MA, 1980.

Lexington Historical Commission. The Garrity House, Hancock Street, Lexington: Significance, Physical Condition, Ideas for Reuse. July 17, 1980. Report to Selectmen of Lexington.

Worthen, Edwin B.. Buckmen Tavern, An Account of the Land and the House, its Ownership, Development and Restoration. Lexington Historical Society, Lexington, MA, 1963.

Reminiscences of Mrs. C.C. Goodwin. Lexington Historical Society archives, Lexington, MA.

Records of the Garrity House Committee, Anne Grady, Chairman.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom